

# SMP Matters

Winter 2013

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## What is the Kentucky Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP)?

The Senior Medicare Patrol is a national program that is funded by the Federal Administration on Aging. SMP staff and volunteers teach Medicare beneficiaries how to prevent, detect, and report healthcare fraud. We visit senior centers, churches, support groups and other places where seniors gather to talk about protecting against, detecting, and reporting Medicare fraud.

SMP volunteers are retired professionals who are highly trained on Medicare issues. SMP volunteers and

staff can help beneficiaries to understand Medicare and other healthcare documents and can provide assistance to beneficiaries who have Medicare billing issues.

SMP visits senior groups, attends community events to distribute information, and seniors and their caregivers can call the KY SMP office at 1-877-603-6558 on weekdays to ask Medicare-related questions or to schedule events or presentations.



## Affordable Care Act Phone Scam



Supported by grant  
#90NP0001/01 from the  
U.S. Administration on  
Aging (AoA), Dept. of  
Health & Human  
Services. Program  
managed by Louisville  
Metro Dept. of Public  
Health & Wellness

Beware of this identity theft scheme where someone calls and threatens to stop your Medicare coverage. In this particular phone scam someone will call and say they are calling from the Medicare office. The caller will say the government is preparing to issue new Medicare cards because of the Affordable Care Act or "ObamaCare" and they need to make sure they have the person's proper information. The caller asks for the senior's Social Security and checking account numbers. If the senior

refuses the caller will threaten to stop their Medicare coverage unless they give their information over.

Remember the government and banking institutions already have your personal information and never ask for it over the phone. If anyone calls and asks for bank account or Social Security numbers, be very suspicious that it is a scam. The best thing to do is end the call ASAP. If you receive calls like this write down the telephone number and report it to the KY SMP at 1-877-603-6558.

## We want you!

### To join the ranks of SMP Volunteers and help us prevent Medicare fraud!

Kentucky Senior Medicare Patrol volunteers are the front-line of defense against Medicare fraud and unnecessary spending. Join 108 other SMP volunteers who take the "Protect, Detect, Report" message into the community to teach Medicare beneficiaries and their caregivers the importance of:

- 1) Protecting personal information against identity thieves, scammers and others who take advantage of senior's trust;
- 2) Detecting suspicious activity; and
- 3) Reporting potential Medicare fraud, waste, abuse, and scams.



## Its Easy!

**Get More Information:** If you want to know more about the SMP, what we do and how we do it, email [Lauren.Anderson2@LouisvilleKY.gov](mailto:Lauren.Anderson2@LouisvilleKY.gov) or call 1-877-603-6558

**Sign up:** If you or someone you know is interested in joining us to protect seniors against scams and fraud, and preserving Medicare benefits, please call us or mail in the form below!

or

**Yes! I am interested in learning more about the Senior Medicare Patrol's volunteer opportunities!** Please contact me with information regarding:

- ☐ ( ) Becoming a Volunteer
- ☐ ( ) What the SMP program does
- ☐ ( ) Having the SMP speak to my group or organization

Mail to: Senior Medicare Patrol  
400 East Gray Street, Room 6  
Louisville KY 40202

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## From the SMP Director



Michelle List  
502-574-6960

### The SMP Mission

Empower & assist Medicare beneficiaries, their families & caregivers to prevent, detect & report healthcare fraud, errors & abuse through outreach, counseling & education.

I have been preparing reports for our funders, the Administration on Aging (AoA) and the Administration for Community Living (ACL). Looking back at what we have done this year, I realized that the real work of SMP is done through volunteers, partners, and subcontractors. I want to thank them for their dedication to this program. I am amazed at our vol-

unteer's speedy replies to requests to staff an event or make a presentation and our partner's willingness to spread the SMP message during their work. I am not the only one who is so appreciative of this work- I frequently receive phone calls and thank you notes

from senior centers and support groups expressing how much they valued the information SMP shared.

Here are a few other 2012 highlights:

- We said goodbye to Jessica in March & welcomed Lauren as the Volunteer Coordinator in July.
- In May we celebrated the work of our volunteers with a wonderful recognition event at The Olmstead.
- Our Regional Conference was in September. In addition to hearing about fraud trends, what other states are doing, I enjoyed the hospitality and delicious food of Philadelphia.

Thank you for making this year a success! I'm looking forward to our work in 2013!

Sincerely,

*Michelle*

## From the SMP Coordinator of Volunteers

Looking back at 2012, I am very proud of the work that SMP accomplished! I am impressed with the level of professionalism and care SMP volunteers show when they speak with seniors about Medicare fraud and scams. Our volunteers have dedicated 1,621 hours (about 6 hours every week-day!) to protecting over 19,000 seniors from scams and fraud.

SMP has improved partnerships with organizations around the state to reach even more beneficiaries. CAP's Senior Nutrition program has helped us to distribute information to homebound seniors. We have spoken many times about the importance of protecting Medicare to Local Area Development

District's network of service providers. The BBB, AARP and the KY Attorney General's Office has provided SMP information at their events around the state.

I look forward to 2013- we will continue to strengthen the KY SMP through dedicated volunteers and new partnerships to prevent Medicare fraud, waste and abuse and to protect the seniors we care about. I invite you to join us in this endeavor, to discuss volunteer or partnership opportunities, please call me at 502-574-6164.

Sincerely,

*Lauren*



Lauren Anderson  
502-574-6164

## 91 Individuals Charged for \$430 Million in False Healthcare Billing

Medicare Fraud Strike Force operations have led to charges against 91 people; including doctors, nurses and other medical professionals, for participation in Medicare fraud schemes totaling about \$429.2 million in false billing. The biggest fraud costs came from more than \$230 million in home healthcare; \$100 million in mental healthcare and \$49 million in ambulance transportation.

"Today's enforcement actions reveal an alarming and unacceptable trend of individuals attempting to exploit federal health care programs to steal billions in taxpayer dollars for personal gain," said Attorney General Holder. A multi-agency team of more than 500

federal, state and local law enforcement agents, investigators and prosecutors participated in the takedown.

The defendants participated in schemes to submit claims to Medicare for treatments that were medically unnecessary or never provided. The defendants are accused of crimes such as: healthcare fraud, conspiracy, seeking or receiving kickbacks, and money laundering.

Health care fraud leads to higher health care costs and makes quality care more difficult to obtain. Working together to stop fraud we will ensure that Americans' hard-earned dollars are used to care for the sick, not to line the pockets of criminals.

**SMP Volunteers prevent Medicare fraud, preserve Medicare for future generations and help save taxpayer dollars.**



Joe, an SMP Volunteer speaking with seniors.

## Where We've Been - Kling Center, Louisville KY

On a beautiful November morning, thirty-one seniors joined SMP volunteer Joe Tod at the Kling Center in Old Louisville to hear a presentation about Senior Medicare Patrol.

Several questions came up around the annual selection of a healthcare plan and why is this necessary. Another question addressed who is the primary payer if I have both Medicare

and Medicaid coverage. Joe directed these types of questions to the senior's local State Health Insurance Program (SHIP). SHIP helps people better understand state health insurance programs like Medicare so they can make the best choices for their health coverage.

To get more general information about the best Medicare plans for you, contact SHIP at 1-877-293-7447.

## Where we're going:

SMP is visiting Senior Centers in these counties this winter!

Marion  
Knox  
Boyle  
Hardin  
Grayson  
Powell  
Estill  
Oldham  
Washington  
Lincoln  
Barren  
Breckinridge  
Wayne  
Logan  
Hart